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We Can Homestead Without "Free" Land; We Just Need Determination!

Rose Smart

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THE GREEN

FOR HOMESTEADERS, ON-TO-THE-LANDERS,
AND DO-IT-YOURSELFERS



REVOLUTION

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North of the Mississippi—

Food, Fuel and Spirit Were Sufficient; Winter Has Passed

By Rebecca & Ferdi Knoess
Pennington, Minn.

April 1, 1967

spring widened brookling
murmuring exquisitely
icy nuances

We can put in the garden in the beginning of May. Even if the soil is ready to be worked before that, it frosts too much to be safe even for hardy crops around here.

Last spring we put in seed potatoes on top of sod, and under a deep mulch of hay. Then we waited for a month and nothing happened. We had to go back and find the spuds and dig a small hole for them in the sod, so they would be in contact with the soil. The potatoes were a little late, but when frost killed the vines, all we had to do was

pull back the hay and there were the spuds ready to be gathered. There wasn't much digging. We harvested over 600 lbs. This year we want more of other root crops and less potatoes.

We're going to make a strawberry bed, with Alpine strawberries. This kind is started from seed. It's supposed to be runnerless, which will take a lot less time to care for, but the berries are smaller. There are June-bearers, Baron Solemacher; ever-bearers, Harzland; and a yellow variety, Alpine Yellow.

I've started some plants in eggshells. If you buy eggs you can use the boxes they come in for containers. They're filled with soil, and the seed started inside. They can be set out, egg-shell and all — no transplanting shock.

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The Knoess Family (August, 1966)

Notes from Heathcote

By Joe & Connie Bellamy

April 15

Spring is descending like a spell on Heathcote Hollow. The trees are edged with green. The daffodils are in full bloom along the front soil beds. The mill stream has a clearer sparkle around the bend along the meadow.

We have been spending the last two months getting settled here, watching the woodpiles diminish as we slowly emerged from winter. Joe's first project was to paint and refloor the baby's room, the small room off the hall upstairs; and some people will be astonished (but we think pleased) when they see what a little color will do. (Earlier, Bill Anacker and James Iden Smith had painted up a storm in the downstairs small meeting room and in the kitchen.)

The Lefevers, the Stevens, the Gozells, and Bill Anacker have put in a good amount of effort to help us make the mill more livable. Tim Lefever worked especially hard getting in pipes for the washing machine hook-up, Jim Gozell put in a heating duct from the new furnace into

the small meeting room, and Tim, Joe, Bill Anacker, and Ray Stevens poured a slab of concrete in the utility room so the Maytag would have a solid base to agitate on (every group has its agitators). Tim also brought over 2x4's and a supply of plaster board in order to put a new ceiling in the springhouse, which will be an important improvement.

The plaster board room upstairs is evolving into the office and brain center of our relations with the outside world. We've built shelving for books and for mail sorting and have a permanent place there for stencils, addressograph, files, and supplies.

Connie is handling the book-keeping and most of the clerical work involved with book orders and with mailing out *The Green Revolution* every month. Her former occupation as a computer programmer seems to have prepared her quite well for these duties. Also, Connie's work in this area has given Joe time to spend on his own writing, which in addition to homesteading, is to become the basis of the Bellamys' economic structure. (He has written short stories for a number of magazines, has

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We Can Homestead Without "Free" Land; We Just Need Determination!

By Rose Smart

So-called "free" land is a moral necessity, as is a decent money system. But it will be generations before enough people become sufficiently aware to distribute and use land morally. In the meantime the fact that a family has to pay a high price for land on which they may homestead is no excuse whatsoever for not homesteading — if they are so moved.

I suggest that the person who does use this excuse is not sufficiently moved, if, indeed, he is moved at all. I say this from having heard, in the last 20 years, too many individual complaints in this vein.

A Rotten Social System

Let me say that there is such a thing as an objective view or recognition that a good many things about our social system are rotten. Louis Potter is correct in what he sees, and he states it well. Only the "stupid" are not able to see it. But to see it is one thing; to whine about it and use it for an excuse not to function is another. And of course to take what responsibility one can for changing the system is yet another. And this stems from an objective, not a subjective view of, or reaction to, what is wrong.

Available Land

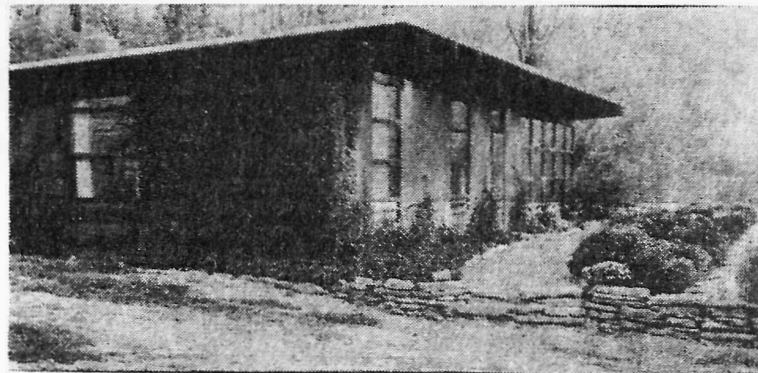
Let's apply this to homesteading. Land is available in this country, and it is far more easily available to the common man than it is in most countries of the world. It costs more than it morally or ideally should, as is true of many, if not most, needs in life. This leaves one with but two alternatives that I can see. Either one forgoes one's needs or one pays the price. We can whine in either case, which is energy wasted; or we can get by paying the price and meeting the need (without whining), which I suggest is a far healthier attitude.

There are a number of ways to get land. One way is to forgo a car, fashionable clothing, traveling, the latest records, books and magazines, lavish entertaining and being entertained—the while one works and saves money toward the land to be purchased. The Smarts did this for their first two homesteads and buildings.

Our Early Homesteading

From 1939 to 1942, Ralph Smart walked 12 miles a day to and from a split shift of 12 hours a day, seven days a week. It was 80 hours a week at 18c an hour, and I budgeted the \$14.40 weekly wage by putting patches upon patches on our clothing, cooking nutritiously but economically, gardening and canning. I thus eked out \$5 a week toward the homestead we planned to build, and did build at the end of two years of apartment living.

From 1942 to 1945, while Ralph was in uniform, I worked and saved the several thousand dollars with which, added to the small sum we got from our first homestead, we began the purchase of our second homestead land. We were able to begin the building in addition to buying our first car. In those three years there were no movies to while away lonely hours, no clothing other than what I sewed, and no gimcracks of any kind. I was strongly moved to get with the homesteading as soon as the war was over and I knew that



Home of the Smarts, Sycamore Hollow Homestead
West Alexandria, Ohio

Ralph was. When that time came, he held down two jobs and I worked in order to pay as we went, while building the homestead. We also postponed having our two children until we were in our mid-thirties.

The stress of working and building at the same time, over a period of ten years, is something I don't care to dwell on now that it is past. It was a rugged price to pay for what we wanted, but we were so moved toward homesteading that we could never consider the alternative of living in town, and paying an endless mortgage on a house and lot that had no individuality whatsoever and no possibilities of creative living as we saw it.

Get With It!

There are less stressful ways in which we might have undertaken a homestead. We could have purchased a trailer and moved it onto a piece of land. We could have rented in the country. We could have purchased land

cooperatively with others, in order to bring down the many costs involved in owning land and in building individually.

All these and other options are open to anyone who wishes to homestead today in a time when jobs are easily available and wages often out of proportion to the value received by the employer. We could do with a little less complaining and excuse-making. Let those who profess to want to homestead, get with it!

If you are truly moved to homestead, you will pay the price (at less cost than ever before in our history) and forego the juvenile "alibis." And when you do build and operate your homestead, you will be not only living a good life, but beckoning others toward the Green Revolution.

[Editor's note: Let's have more reports on getting started at homesteading. Some would-be homesteaders may find help and support in planning their own adventure.]

The Bay Area Scene

By Mathew Davis
103 LaVerne
Mill Valley, Calif.

Green revolutionists, who advocate dropping out of urban industrial living, might well consider the great wave of young social drop-outs so visible here in the San Francisco Bay area of California. They too reject the values and goals of commercial America and computerized technology.

The School of Living uses reason and careful social analysis as important elements in its program. Emotion and psychedelic trips characterize the strivings of the Hippies, the New People, the Love Generation, or whatever name you favor.

Many who read *The Green Revolution* are patiently working towards intentional community wherever they gather. What we are slowly edging towards, they already have via turned-on short-cut.

I exaggerate and simplify; but there is much truth in what I say. To date I don't know of any Hippie-started community in the sense that School of Living uses the word. There are many extended-family groupings, and there is a strong sense of unity, wherever New People come together.

There is no decentralist theory present; and the centers of the Love Generation are urban. But many young people instinctively head for the hills, and there are Hippie gatherings all up and down the California coast. Many garden, and I have heard that a few even try living off the wilds,

Indian fashion.

Humanness and Awareness

The pioneers of the new movement were the Beat Generation of the last decade. Famous as nihilists, many Beat poets and artists found that in rejecting U. S. advertising and middleclass values they were born into a world of traditional humanness and a universal awareness. Some moved to the hinterland and homesteaded, some have become major figures in the art world, and some have delved heavily into Oriental philosophy and religion.

It is the latter who are spearheading the new waves of Great Society drop-outs. For example, Allen Ginsburg and Gary Snyder, deeply involved in Hinduism and Buddhism, are leaders of the inner revolution. But there is no shortage of young men with ideas of their own.

Work and Play

At its least, this phenomena is an experiment in the use of leisure. The February 21 *Look* magazine's excellent article "The Generation Gap" outlines the social causes behind the new direction. It also says that the Hippies could be the advance guard of an automated society where work is not needed. However, one Hippie tendency is to break down barriers between work and play so that money is earned at an activity which is enjoyed and every bit as useful as many of the boring and disliked jobs of the old society. *Newsweek*, February 6, concludes that even if young Hippies get bored and return to

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